

"I HAVE A DREAM" – LEARNING ABOUT MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

TEACHER VERSION

Subject Level:

Elementary School History

Grade Level:

4-5

Approx. Time Required:

60-120 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to understand changes in population, voting rates, and education levels of African Americans since the early 1960s, around the time Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.
- Students will be able to select facts and a photograph of Martin Luther King Jr. to display on a poster.
- Students will be able to share what they learned orally with a partner or small group.

Activity Description

Students will analyze census data and graphs that demonstrate how certain aspects of the lives of African Americans have changed since civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963. Students will select a fact from these data, facts from other sources, and a historical photograph to include on a poster about King.

Suggested Grade Level:

4-5

Approximate Time Required:

60-120 minutes

Learning Objectives:

- Students will be able to understand changes in population, voting rates, and education levels of African Americans since the early 1960s, around the time Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.
 - Students will be able to select facts and a photograph of Martin Luther King Jr. to display on a poster.
 - Students will be able to share what they learned orally with a partner or small group.
-

Topics:

- Civil rights movement
- Martin Luther King Jr.
- Population

Skills Taught:

- Analyzing change over time
 - Drawing conclusions
 - Reading bar graphs
-

Materials Required:

- The student version of this activity, 12 pages, which contains some images that should be printed in color
- Colored pencils and/or markers
- Construction paper or poster board
- Glue
- Scissors
- Sticky notes

Additional photos of Martin Luther King Jr. and a projector to show online resources to the class are optional.

Activity Items

The following items are a part of this activity. Items and their sources appear at the end of this teacher version.

- Item 1: Estimated African American Population in the United States
- Item 2: African American Voting Rates in Presidential Elections
- Item 3: Percentage of African American Adults Who Graduated From High School
- Item 4: Percentage of African American Adults Who Graduated From College
- Item 5: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Infographic
- Item 6: Photos of Martin Luther King Jr.

For more information to help you introduce your students to the Census Bureau, read ["Census Bureau 101 for Students."](#) This information sheet can be printed and passed out to your students as well.

Standards Addressed

See charts below. For more information about the standards, read [*Overview of Education Standards and Guidelines Addressed in Statistics in Schools Activities*](#).

Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Standard	Strand	Cluster
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4.7 Interpret information presented visually, orally, or quantitatively (e.g., in charts, graphs, diagrams, time lines, animations, or interactive elements on Web pages) and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of the text in which it appears.	RI 4 - Reading Informational Text	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.5.4 Report on a topic or text or present an opinion, sequencing ideas logically and using appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details to support main ideas or themes; speak clearly at an understandable pace.	SL 5 - Speaking & Listening	Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

UCLA National Standards for History: Standards for Grades K-4

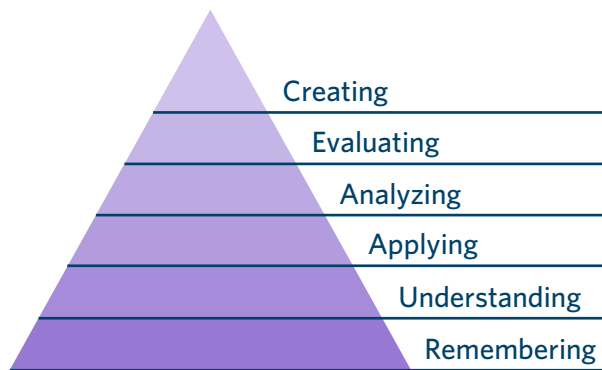
Era	Standard
Topic 3: The History of the United States: Democratic Principles and Values and the People From Many Cultures Who Contributed to Its Cultural, Economic, and Political Heritage	Standard 4C: The student understands historic figures who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.

UCLA National Standards for History: Historical Thinking Standards

Standard	Description
2 - Historical Comprehension	<p>Utilize visual and mathematical data. Students will interpret graphs indicating the kinds of social change that African Americans have experienced since Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech during the civil rights movement.</p> <p>Draw upon visual, literary, and musical sources. Students will select photographs and information to display on a poster.</p>
4 - Historical Research Capabilities	<p>Obtain historical data. Students will use data from various sources, including historical photos.</p>

Bloom's Taxonomy

Students will recall and learn important facts about Martin Luther King Jr. and will **apply** this knowledge to create a poster.



Teacher Notes

Before the Activity

Students should have a basic understanding of the following ideas and concepts:

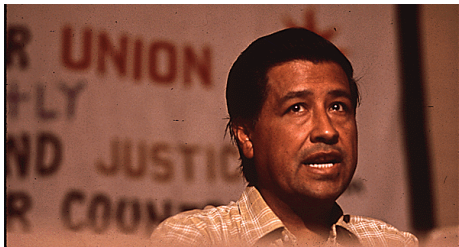
- Martin Luther King Jr.'s role in history
- Background information about the civil rights movement, including the Montgomery bus boycott
- How to compare data from different time periods

When printing the student version of the activity, teachers should print the photos of Martin Luther King Jr. (Item 6) — and any additional photos of King they would like to include — single-sided, as students will need to be able to cut out the photos to create a poster.

Teachers will ask students to write important facts they already know about Martin Luther King Jr. on sticky notes, in their notebooks, or elsewhere (per teachers' preference). Teachers may decide to show a clip of King's "I Have a Dream" speech to get students thinking.

Teachers will tell students that they will each create a poster about Martin Luther King Jr. at the end of the activity. Teachers will show students a poster featuring a different famous American as an example. Teachers can use the example poster of Cesar Chavez below or create their own.

Example Poster of Cesar Chavez



Cesar Chavez

1. He was a Mexican-American.
2. He was a migrant farmworker.
3. He served in the U.S. Navy.
4. He founded the United Farm Workers of America.
5. He went on a hunger strike to bring awareness to the rights of farmworkers.
6. He led farmworker strikes and boycotts on crops such as grapes to bring awareness to farmworkers' rights.

If students have limited knowledge of Martin Luther King Jr., teachers should facilitate a discussion about him.

During the Activity

Teachers can choose to electronically display the graphs and infographic in **Items 1–5** as students complete part 1 of the activity. Depending on students' skill levels, teachers can choose to let the students answer questions as a class or more independently.

Then teachers will facilitate part 2 of the activity, where students each create a poster. (Teachers may choose to wait to pass out **Item 6** until this part of the activity begins.) Each student should select one fact from the answers to include on the poster, along with five other facts they identify from their brainstorm before the activity, textbooks, or class notes. (Teachers could display the example poster again during this time.) Teachers will then direct students to select one image of Martin Luther King Jr. to include on their poster. Teachers will also distribute the markers, poster board, glue, etc., at this time.

Teachers will walk around the room, looking at the facts students are choosing to include on their posters. Teachers might ask the following questions: Why do we remember Martin Luther King Jr.? What events were important in his life? And if a student has included a fact with little relevance, teachers could ask: Does this fact make King a famous civil rights leader?

After the Activity

Teachers will ask students to share their posters with a partner or in a group of three. After the presentations, teachers could display students' posters around the classroom.

Extension Ideas

- Teachers could instruct students to use databases such as PebbleGo or books from the school library to research facts about other civil rights leaders, such as Rosa Parks.
- Teachers could read to students from school library books or other materials about the civil rights movement and leaders like Martin Luther King Jr.
- Teachers could ask students to act out famous events in the lives of civil rights leaders, for example, the Montgomery bus boycott or King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

Student Activity

Printable student versions are available [here](#).

Activity Items

The following items are part of this activity and appear at the end of this student version.

- Item 1: Estimated African American Population in the United States
- Item 2: African American Voting Rates in Presidential Elections
- Item 3: Percentage of African American Adults Who Graduated From High School
- Item 4: Percentage of African American Adults Who Graduated From College
- Item 5: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Infographic
- Item 6: Photos of Martin Luther King Jr.

Student Learning Objectives

- I will be able to understand changes in population, voting rates, and education levels of African Americans since the early 1960s, around the time Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech.
- I will be able to select facts and a photograph of Martin Luther King Jr. to display on a poster.
- I will be able to share what I learned orally with a partner or small group.

Part 1 - Look at the Data

1. Look at **Item 1: Estimated African American Population in the United States**. Did the African American population increase or decrease between 1963 and 2020? By how much?

The African American population increased by about 21 million.

2. Look at **Item 2: African American Voting Rates in Presidential Elections**. Did the percentage rate of African Americans who voted in presidential elections increase, decrease or stay about the same from 1964 to 2020?

The percentage rate of African Americans who voted in presidential elections stayed about the same from 1964 to 2020.

3. Look at **Item 3: Percentage of African American Adults Who Graduated From High School**.

Has the percentage of African American adults who graduated from high school increased or decreased since 1964? By how much?

The percentage of African American adults who graduated from high school has increased by about 64 percentage points since 1964.

4. Look at **Item 4: Percentage of African American Adults Who Graduated From College**. Did the percentage of African American adults who graduated from college increase or decrease from 1964 to 2020? By how much?

The percentage of African American adults with a four-year college degree increased by about 24 percentage points.

5. Now look at **Item 5: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Infographic**. How many African American college students were there in 2020?

There were 2.85 million African American college students in 2020.

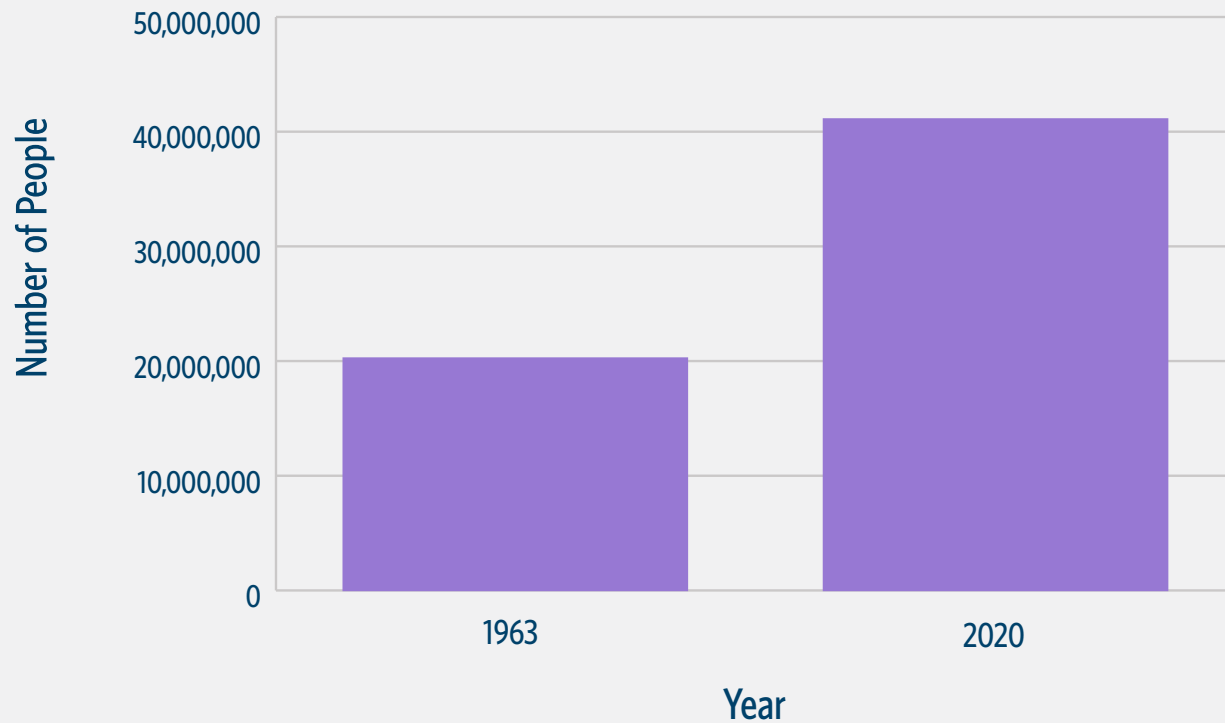
6. Look at your answers and at **Items 1–5**. Why do you think these changes happened? What kinds of things could have caused these changes?

Student answers will vary but may include changes in the law since the civil rights movement — in part due to the efforts of leaders like Martin Luther King Jr., including his “I Have a Dream” speech and the Montgomery bus boycott.

Part 2 – Create a Poster

Your teacher will provide you with instructions and an example for creating a poster about Martin Luther King Jr.

Item 1: Estimated African American Population in the United States



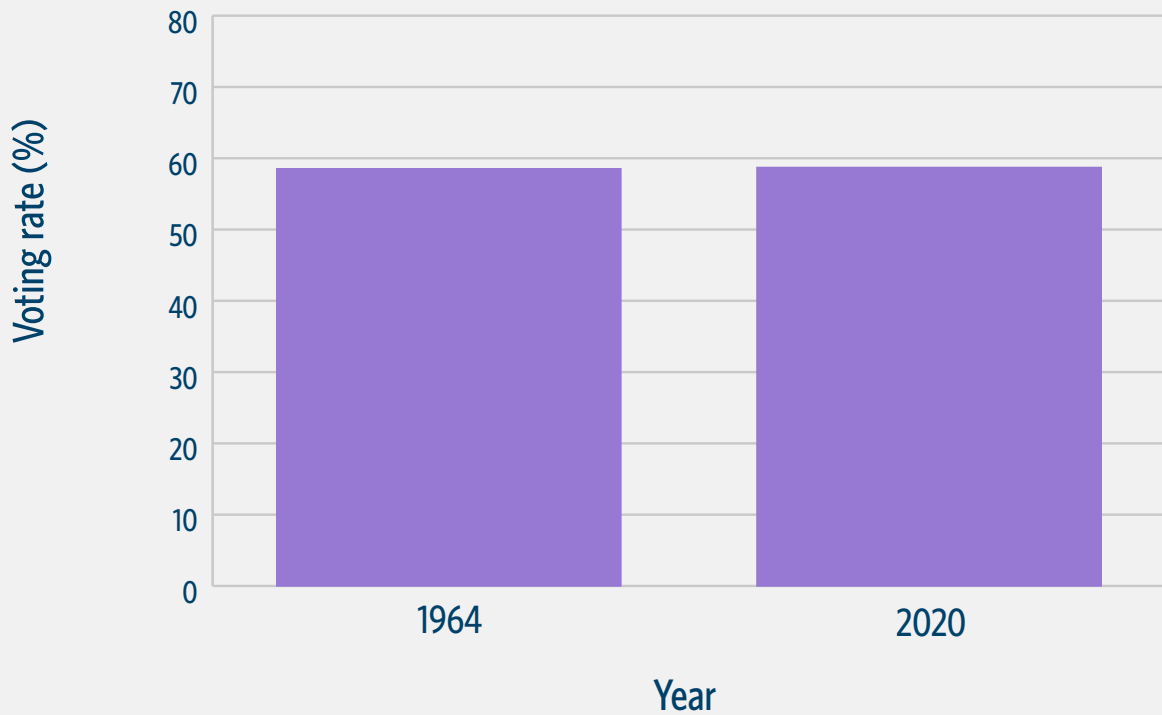
1963 Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Facts for Features, The 50th Anniversary of the I Have a Dream Speech and the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom*.

www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2013/cb13-ff22.html

2020 Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *2020 Census, Black or African American alone in the United States*.

<https://data.census.gov/cedsci/all?q=black%20population>

Item 2: African American Voting Rates in Presidential Elections



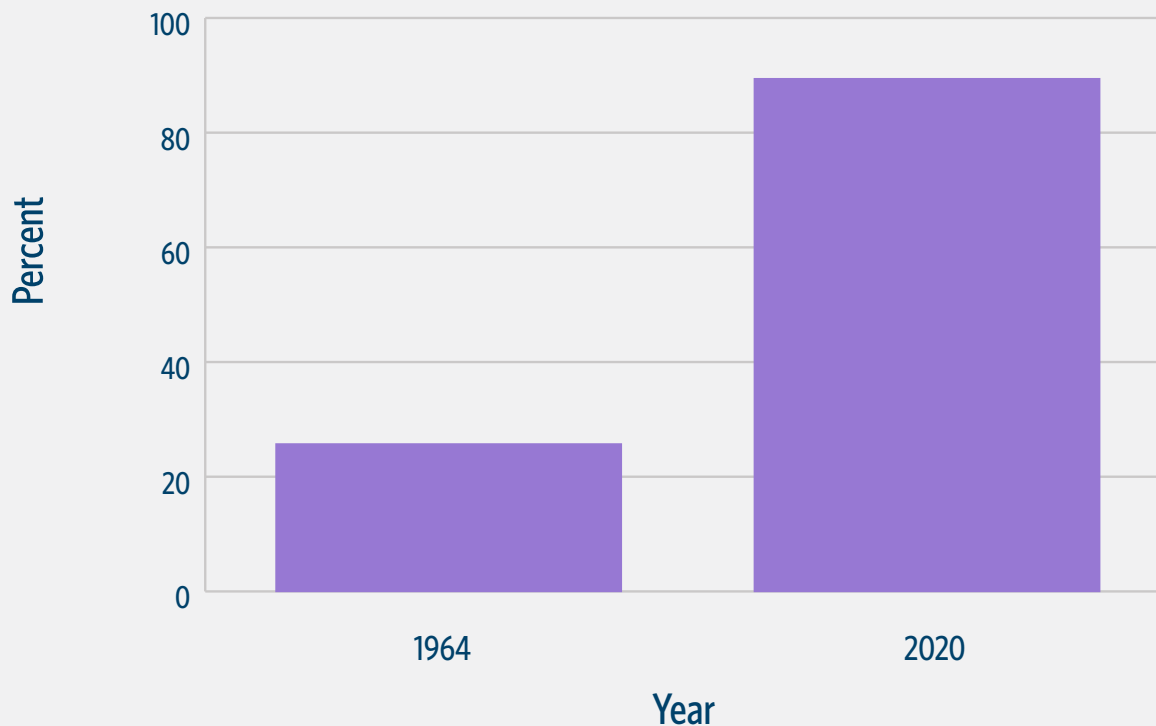
1964 Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Facts for Features, The 50th Anniversary of the I Have a Dream Speech and the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom*.

www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2013/cb13-ff22.html

2020 Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Current Population Survey, November 2020 (Table A-9. Reported Voting Rates of Total Voting Age Population in Presidential Election Years, by Selected Characteristics: November 1968 to 2020)*.

www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/voting-historical-time-series.html
(Table A-9)

Item 3: Percentage of African American Adults Who Graduated From High School



1964 Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Facts for Features, The 50th Anniversary of the I Have a Dream Speech and the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom*.

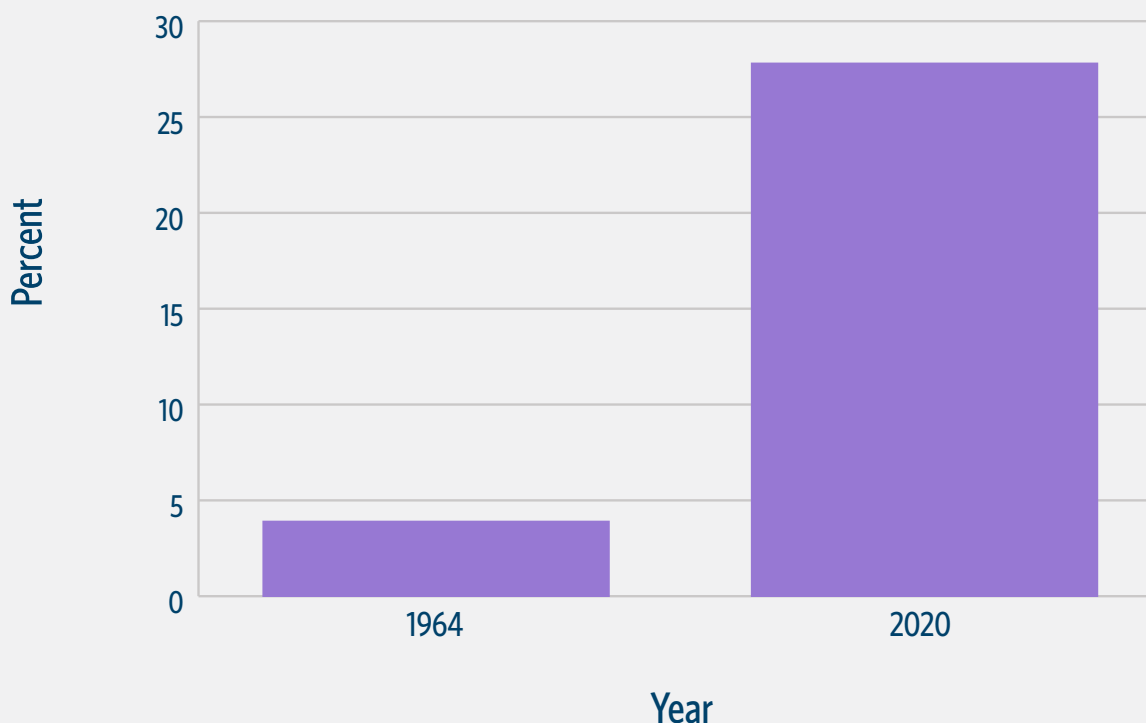
www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2013/cb13-ff22.html

2020 Data Source: Table A-2. *Percent of People 25 Years and Over Who Have Completed High School or College, by Race, Hispanic Origin and Sex: Selected Years 1940 to 2020*.

www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/educational-attainment/cps-historical-time-series.html
(Table A-2: Completed 4 Years of High School or more)

This graph reflects the percentage of African Americans 25 and older who had at least a high school diploma or equivalent education in 1964 and 2020.

Item 4: Percentage of African American Adults Who Graduated From College



1964 Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Facts for Features, The 50th Anniversary of the I Have a Dream Speech and the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom*.

www.census.gov/newsroom/facts-for-features/2013/cb13-ff22.html

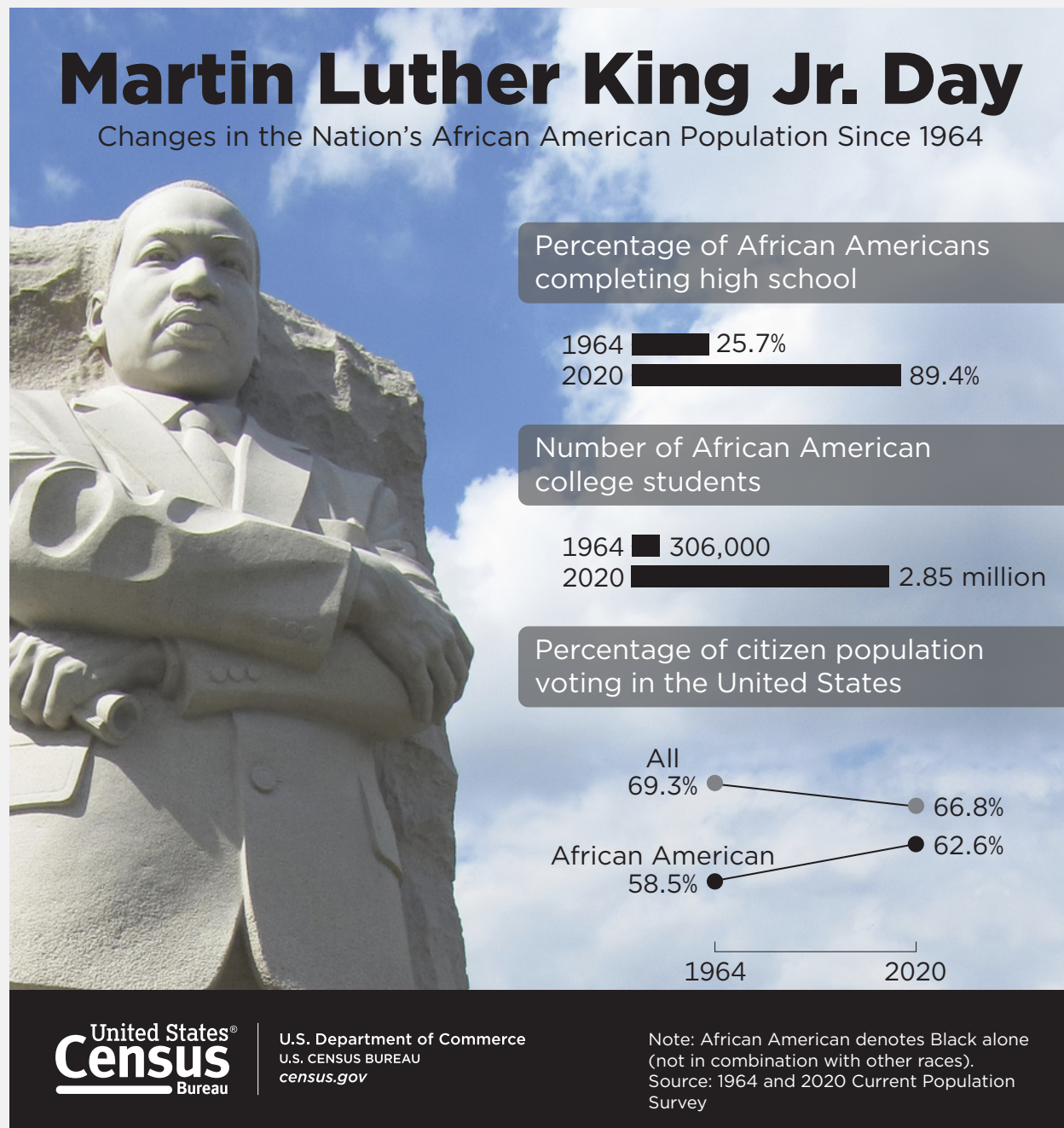
2020 Data Source: Table A-2. *Percent of People 25 Years and Over Who Have Completed High School or College, by Race, Hispanic Origin and Sex: Selected Years 1940 to 2020*.

www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/educational-attainment/cps-historical-time-series.html

(Table A-2: Completed 4 Years of College or more)

This graph reflects the percentage of African Americans 25 and older who had a degree from a four-year institution or equivalent education in 1964 and 2020.

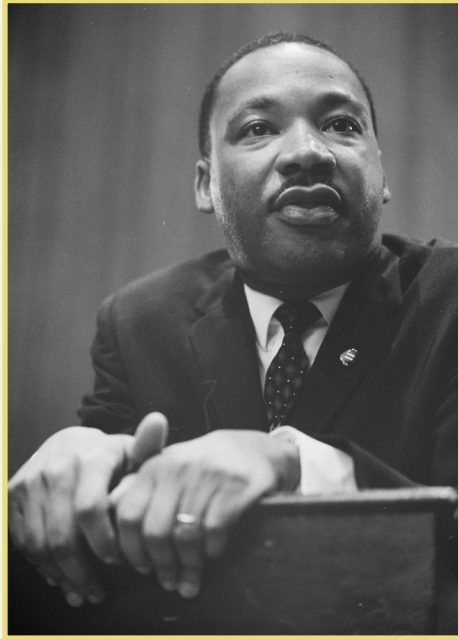
Item 5: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Infographic



www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2022/comm/mlk-jr-day.html

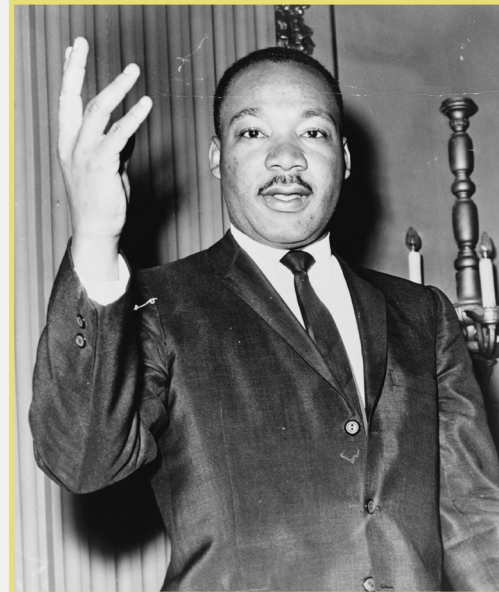
Item 6: Photos of Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King press conference. 1964.



www.loc.gov/item/2003688129

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., half-length portrait, facing front. 1964.



www.loc.gov/item/00651714

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., 1929-1968--in memoriam.



www.loc.gov/wiseguide/jan03/kingjr.html